



How to Take Care of Livestock during Monsoon

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It is true that the rainy season is here and farmers are either celebrating the rains or lamenting about their negative effects of the rains. In fact, unless farmers take immediate steps, they may end up losing many of their animals that they intend to sell. It is now a long wet season and animals are susceptible to so many challenges that if a farmer is not careful, they may be killed by these diseases. This is what you have to look out for.

Leaking Shades

When water leaks into the shade, it affects the animals' comfort. It does not matter whether you are keeping chicken, goats, pigs or cattle, etc. If the shade was not clean enough, the water leads to production of chemicals such as ammonia, which affect the eyes of animals, especially if it has no proper ventilation. It also causes irritation in the body. It is why the animals' eyes swelling. Another disease called coccidiosis also occurs as a result of water leaking onto dirty shades. The best way to avoid this is to make sure that the shade does not leak and that it is always clean. If you are keeping goats, you need to take even an extra effort to keep their hooves away from water. Water causes rotting hoof diseases among goats.

More Grass is Not So Good

When the rains come, new young grass sprouts up. This is very good for the animals. Animals easily pick at the soft grass and eat it up in big quantities. It is, however, worth noting that this grass has a lot of water and little fibre, which is not good for the animal. Animals need fibre for proper digestion. The water fills up the stomachs and yet it is virtually useless. This is why it is common to see animals passing watery dung during wet seasons. What animal keepers should do is to harvest/cut some of this young grass and dry it up when there is sunshine. It will reduce the water in the grass hence turn it into a good feed.

More Moisture, More Bacteria

The moisture on the ground produces a lot of bacteria that can cause disease. The most common of them being are worms. During the wet season, therefore, farmers must stock a broad spectrum of de-wormers. Worms, if not treated, affect the animal's general performance. De-worming must be done at the beginning of the rainy season and throughout the season because worms multiply more during this period.

Ticks Have a Field Day in the Wet

Ticks are one of the most economically destabilising cattle pests. They also spread faster during the rainy season too. If not treated, ticks can suck cows dry and eventually lead to

death because they spread a disease called east coast fever. In addition, there are more flies during the wet season too. Some of the flies are just inconveniencing because they do not bite, but simply fly around the cow, thus inconveniencing it. However, there are some flies which are deadly, for example, tsetse flies. Tsetse flies do not only suck blood from the cows, but their bite is too painful too. In addition, they spread a disease called nagana to the cows, which if not treated early leads to death. Farmers should make sure that they spray their animals regularly and cut all bushes near their shades.

Disease of the Udder

The disease of the udder also becomes more prevalent during this season. Note that when the udder is diseased, then you have lost the animal. This disease is called udder mastitis. The udder swells and stops producing milk. The good thing is that it can be treated using general antibiotics. Also make sure that there are disinfectants to disinfect the farm all the time.

Other Factors

Avoid Mouldy Feeds

If water gets into stored feeds, they will develop moulds. And when they are fed to animals in this state, they will carry bacteria. Gradually, the mouldy feeds can cause cancer. Make sure that the feeds are stored in a dry place.

Other Common Conditions

Because the ground is soft and wet, cows tend to slide and break their limbs. In addition, external elements like stones and soil converge and entangle in between the hooves of animals, hence making it difficult for them to move. Make sure that all these are checked regularly.

